

TESTIMONIAL

OF

MEMBERS

OF

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

OF

PHILADELPHIA, NEW YORK, AND BOSTON,

IN BEHALF OF

WM. T. G. MORTON, M. D.

PHILADELPHIA:

COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.

1860.

TESTIMONIAL
OF MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION OF PHILADELPHIA,
IN BEHALF OF WM. T. G. MORTON, M. D.

To THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS:

February 15, 1860.

The vast importance of the effect of the inhalation of ether in preventing and suspending pain has long ceased to be a matter of doubt among the members of the medical profession, and is too well known to the intelligent citizens of Philadelphia to need any further exposition. Etherization has been tested in countless instances, under a great variety of circumstances, during more than twelve years of constant employment by thousands of operators; and the result of this unsurpassed experience is decisive in confirmation of its safety and efficiency as a suppressor of physical suffering, and a powerful assistant of the healing art.

Believing, therefore, that anæsthetic inhalation is the most available and potent means of alleviating pain yet employed in the practice of surgery; and, consequently, that it is one of the greatest gifts to humanity of the present age, we cannot but regard the original and successful introducer of this invaluable boon as entitled to the warm gratitude of mankind.

We believe the practical originator of anæsthetic inhalation to be Dr. William T. G. Morton, of Boston, Mass., in whose behalf we are happy to bear witness in this testimonial.

We are convinced that he is the one who first resorted to ethereal inhalation for the purpose of producing insensibility to pain in a patient while undergoing a surgical operation; and that he is the one who first succeeded in effecting this result. He was, indisputably, the first to urge the anæsthetic properties of the vapor of ether upon the attention of the medical profession; and thus succeeded in establishing the practice of anæsthetic inhalation.

We therefore take great pleasure, and at the same time perform an act of duty, in recommending the claims of Dr. Morton to the favorable consideration of our fellow citizens; and would cordially urge upon them the propriety of showing their estimate of his services by a substantial acknowledgment, such as is manifestly due from an enlightened community to one who has conferred upon its members so inestimable a benefit.

We may refer to the annals of medicine in the Old World for many instances in which analogous discoveries of less moment have been recognized and paid for by European governments, sometimes even before their true value had been ascertained. The length of time which has elapsed since the adoption of etherization has only the more firmly established its position by demonstrating its safety and developing its usefulness.

Our National Government has admitted the justice and importance of Dr. Morton's claims in the introduction of ethereal anæsthesia, but has neglected to provide the proper reward.

Under these circumstances the plan of individual contribution has been successfully resorted to by the citizens of Boston and New York as the best suited to the temper of our people, and the most likely to reach a satisfactory conclusion.

An opportunity is now offered to the citizens of Philadelphia to unite with their neighbors in the same work of benevolence and justice; and it is in this that we earnestly desire to interest them.

We sincerely hope that our townsmen, in whose liberality and sense of right we have great confidence, may join us in rendering the tribute to his merits and necessities which has elsewhere been accorded to him, and which we believe him to deserve.

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PROCEEDINGS

*Of the Medical Profession of Philadelphia, in behalf of
W. T. G. Morton, M. D.*

A meeting of the members of the medical profession who had endorsed the testimonial in behalf of Dr. W. T. G. Morton, was held at the Hospital Buildings, Spruce Street, on Monday, March 26, 1860; when, on motion, Dr. Wilson Jewell was called to the chair, and Dr. T. H. Bache was chosen Secretary.

The following preamble and resolutions were then offered, and having been read by the Secretary, were unanimously adopted:—

“ *Whereas*, after innumerable trials, made during the last fourteen years, it has been established to the satisfaction of the world, that the inhalation of ether may be safely employed for producing insensibility to pain;

“ *And whereas*, the attention of the medical profession, and through it of the public generally, was directed to this fact by Dr. Wm. T. G. Morton, of Boston, who first practically demonstrated that ether may be safely used by inhalation for annulling pain, in the Massachusetts General Hospital, where, on the 16th of October, 1846, a severe surgical operation was successfully performed by the late Dr. John C. Warren, without pain to the patient,

whilst under the influence of ether, administered by Dr. Morton;

“And whereas, our National Government, whilst admitting the claims of Dr. Morton, has failed to reward him for this great service to his country and to humanity:

“Resolved, that in the opinion of this meeting, the world is indebted to Dr. Morton for having practically proved the value and safety of ether as an anæsthetic agent, and that he is, therefore, entitled to the lasting gratitude of mankind.

“Resolved, That we cordially recommend to our fellow-citizens the ‘National Testimonial Fund,’ lately commenced in Boston and New York in behalf of Dr. Morton, and that we will do all in our power to influence them to subscribe to the same.

“Resolved, That, for the purpose of facilitating the subscriptions, a copy of these resolutions duly authenticated by the officers of this meeting, be furnished to Messrs. Brown, Brothers & Co., the receivers for this city, together with such other documents in explanation of the Testimonial as may be approved by the officers of this meeting.”

On motion adjourned.

WILSON JEWELL, *Chairman.*

THOS. HEWSON BACHE, *Secretary.*

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T. D. MITCHELL, M. D., Professor of Materia Medica and General Therapeutics.

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PROCEEDINGS

At a Meeting of the Medical Profession of New York.

On the 24th of June, a meeting of medical gentlemen, interested in raising a national testimonial for the benefit of the discoverer of Anæsthesia, was held at the residence of Dr. WILLARD PARKER.

The hour for organization having arrived, Dr. PARKER addressed the meeting, explained its objects, and proposed for President Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH; which nomination, having been seconded, was voted upon, and carried. Dr. GURDON BUCK was then elected Corresponding Secretary, and Drs. BIBBINS and THOMAS, Recording Secretaries.

The meeting being now duly organized, the business of the evening was called for, and proceeded in this wise:—

1st. Dr. JOHN WATSON read a list of the names of some of the most prominent, benevolent, and wealthy of the citizens of New York, and proposed that each gentleman present should charge himself with visiting such of them as he had most influence with, and raising as large subscriptions as possible to head the list. This was acted upon; a list of one hundred names was read, and the duty of canvassing them assumed by various gentlemen composing the meeting.

2d. Dr. BUCK moved that a committee of medical men be appointed to confer with gentlemen out of the profession as to the most efficient means for accomplishing the end in view. This was seconded by Dr. PARKER, and carried. On the Committee, the President then appointed

Drs. JOHN W. FRANCIS,	VALENTINE MOTT,	JAMES R. WOOD,
WILLARD PARKER,	JAMES MINOR,	GURDON BUCK,
JOHN WATSON,	J. MARION SIMS,	Jos. M. SMITH;

and upon motion of Dr. SAYRE, the President was added to it. This committee, it was agreed, should meet at the house of Dr. PARKER at an early date.

3d. It was then moved by Dr. PARKER, that a committee of one selected from the Medical Board of each public charity of the city and its vicinity should be appointed to wait upon the Boards directing the various institutions, and solicit

donations in behalf of the object which has called us together this evening. This motion was seconded by Dr. WATSON, and carried. The following appointments were then made by the Chair:—

<i>New York Hospital,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Dr. GURDON BUCK.
<i>Bellevue</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	JAS. R. WOOD.
<i>Emigrants'</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	J. M. CARNOCHAN.
<i>St. Vincent's</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	WM. H. VAN BUREN.
<i>St. Luke's</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	BENJ. OGDEN.
<i>Jews'</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	J. MOSES.
<i>Women's</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	J. M. SIMS.
<i>Child's</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	G. T. ELLIOTT, Jr.
<i>Quarantine</i>	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	ELISHA HARRIS.
<i>New York Lying-in Asylum,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	T. F. COCK.
<i>Brooklyn City Hospital,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	HUTCHINSON.
<i>Long Island College Hospital,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	AYRES.
<i>Colored Home Hospital,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	FITCH.
<i>New York Eye Infirmary,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	DUBOIS.
<i>New York Ophthalmic Hospital,</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	"	GARRISH.

* * * * *

4th. It was moved by Dr. WATSON, that the minutes of this meeting be transmitted to Dr. WM. T. G. MORTON, by the Secretary, which was carried.

No further business appearing, the meeting then adjourned.

JOSEPH M. SMITH, M. D., *President.*

GURDON BUCK, M. D., *Corresponding Secretary.*

T. GAILLARD THOMAS, M. D., *Recording Secretary.*

S U B S C R I P T I O N S

THAT HEAD THE BOSTON AND NEW YORK CONTRIBUTIONS.

Board of Ten Governors for the City of New York,	.	\$1500
Massachusetts General Hospital,	.	1000
Amos A. Lawrence,	.	1000
John P. Cushing,	.	500
The Society of the New York Hospital,	.	500
The Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York,	.	250
James Brown,	.	500
John David Wolf,	.	250
Peter Lorillard,	.	250
James Lenox,	.	250
Benjamin L. Swan,	.	100
George T. Trimble,	.	100
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John C. Green,	.	100
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Henry Chauncey	.	100
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	\$100
S. L. Snarez,	100
William E. Wilmarding,	100
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APPENDIX A.

THE NEW YORK APPEAL.

The Medical Profession have, from the earliest ages, felt the need of some safe and efficient agent for annulling pain.

The ordinary anodynes, long in use, have never supplied this deficiency, and the various new agents which, within the past sixty or eighty years, have been substituted for these, have, until recently, proved either too dangerous or too unreliable to be employed in general practice.

Wine and strong alcoholic drinks, given in such quantity as to induce intoxication, were occasionally employed, even before the commencement of the present century, for rendering persons insensible to the pain of surgical operations. With the same end in view, some surgeons, addressing the intellect, were in the habit of exciting sudden fear, alarm, or astonishment, to divert the attention of their patients. Others, again, resorted to the uncertain and inexplicable influence of mesmerism. Still more recently, the nitrous oxide gas, administered by inhalation, has, as originally suggested by Sir Humphrey Davy, been employed for producing temporary loss of consciousness. But this, too, after a fair trial, has failed, and the hopes founded upon it have proved nugatory and delusive. So that, up to this point, the want of a reliable agent for rendering the human body insensible to pain—a want so long felt, and to obviate which so many fruitless efforts had been made—was still to be supplied. That want, however, has since been fully met.

The first great triumph of placing in the hands of the profession an agent capable of rendering the patient safely, and at will, utterly insensible to the stroke of the surgeon's knife, was in detecting and establishing by experiment the anæsthetic powers of sulphuric ether. For this discovery the world is indebted to Dr. Wm. T. G. Morton, of Boston.

Whatever may have been the steps preliminary to this remarkable discovery, Dr. Morton's claim to it is established beyond all controversy, and his merit in this respect, with those who have taken the trouble to inform themselves on the subject, can be no longer a question of dispute.

Nor can the importance of his early investigations and experiments

under the guidance of Providence, in reference to the properties and uses of ether, be, at the present day, too highly estimated. The introduction of this agent as an anaesthetic, and of the various other agents of the same class—as chloroform, amyline, and the like—to which this directly led, has done more for the mitigation of human suffering than any other discovery, with the exception, perhaps, of vaccination, for which the world is indebted to medical science in either ancient or modern times.

The benefit derived from these newly discovered agents is not confined to the harder procedures of operative surgery. They are now in hourly requisition in every quarter of the civilized world for suspending all sense of suffering during the severest throes of childbirth, for arresting convulsions, for relaxing spasms, for suspending volition and overcoming muscular resistance during the reduction of fractures and dislocations, for allaying restlessness, wakefulness, and morbid excitability; even for assuaging the pangs of approaching dissolution, not to speak of the almost innumerable minor uses to which they are applied, as well in the investigation as in the treatment of disease.

In view of these advantages from the use of anaesthetics, we feel that Dr. Morton—the first to demonstrate their safety and efficiency, and to establish them in general practice, has conferred a boon upon humanity as imperishable as it is important, and one of such a character as to entitle him to rank among the benefactors of mankind.

As members of the medical profession in the city of New York, and as physicians and surgeons to the various hospitals and infirmaries in this city and its vicinity, we therefore rejoice to learn that a movement has been commenced by our professional brethren and other gentlemen of Boston, to establish a national testimonial, by voluntary subscriptions, for the benefit of Dr. Morton. In this movement, after full deliberation and consultation among ourselves, we are ready to participate in accordance with the plan of those who originated it, which plan is set forth by the gentlemen of Boston in the following terms:—

We propose that a national subscription be instituted, the avails of which shall be paid into the hands of THOMAS B. CURTIS and CHARLES H. MILLS, Esquires, as Trustees—to be held, appropriated, and invested upon such trusts, and for such uses, for the benefit of Dr. MORTON, as the Trustees may determine.

The following gentlemen, as bankers, have agreed to receive for the Trustees any sums paid to them for the purpose above mentioned:—

JAMES BROWN, New York. BROWN, BROTHERS & Co., Philadelphia.
W. H. GRAHAM, Baltimore. JAMES ADGER, Charleston.

SAMUEL NICHOLSON & Co., New Orleans.

Under governments more arbitrary and restrictive than our own, but more capable of meeting the claims of science, the awards of merit are not usually left, as with us, to the bounty of private individuals. Discoveries and improvements of infinitely less importance to science or humanity, than that for which we are indebted to Dr. Morton, are at the courts of Europe promptly met by national honors and emoluments.

In our own country, it is true, the National Government, after carefully investigating Dr. Morton's claims, has acknowledged the benefit he has conferred upon it, but has nevertheless failed, as yet, to supply the recompense.

With these remarks, we have the honor of recommending Dr. Morton's claims for remuneration to the consideration of our fellow-citizens, and of soliciting their subscriptions in behalf of the fund which it is proposed to raise for his benefit.

What the Government in this respect has failed to do, it is to be hoped, for the credit of the American name, and from the noble individual examples already set, that the discerning and liberal people of the United States will not leave entirely unaccomplished.

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APPENDIX B.

THE BOSTON APPEAL.

To the Public.

The power of etheric vapors to produce a safe insensibility to pain during surgical operations, and on other occasions of great physical suffering, is one of the most beneficent discoveries that has been conferred upon the human race. It is generally conceded that Dr. W. T. G. MORTON, of Boston, was instrumental in presenting this fact to the world. Nearly the whole of the Medical Profession [see page 27 *et seq.*] of this city, in the midst of whom the discovery was made, together with other bodies of competent persons, who have investigated its origin, have, after careful scrutiny, concurred in assigning this merit to Dr. MORTON—and public opinion has long since affirmed their verdict.

It is not necessary to enter in detail into the circumstances which have prevented Dr. MORTON from receiving any pecuniary benefit from this discovery.

The fact is certain, that Dr. MORTON has been an instrument, under Divine Providence, of introducing to the world one of the most remarkable discoveries of this or any other age, and that he has received no reward for it but the consciousness of having done so.

We are sure that we interpret the feelings of thousands, when we say that a substantial national memorial should be presented to Dr. MORTON

How often has the poor sufferer risen from beneath the surgeon's knife, with nerves untouched by the slightest sensation of the torture that would otherwise have been his! How often has the mother passed in unconscious slumber, through "the perils of childbirth," to wake to her new happiness, without one memory of its agonies, and breathed, with the prayer of thanksgiving to God, a thought of him—to her, perhaps, the unknown discoverer—whose happy conception, perseverance and courage, first established the astonishing fact, that the human frame may suffer all the conditions, and not one of the sensations of pain! What has already occurred throughout the whole world, since this discovery was made—in hospitals, in private chambers of the sick, on fields of battle, on the ocean, and on the land—wherever humanity undergoes

the "ills that flesh is heir to"—is to occur through countless ages, while the race is left upon earth! And yet, year rolls after year, and the spontaneous gratitude that is felt and uttered, whenever and wherever this great discovery is used or contemplated, finds no permanent voice, because no efforts are made to concentrate and direct it to its object.

We propose that such efforts be now made. We think that the people of the United States, acting individually, should do what their government has neglected, or been able to do. National testimonials, established by the voluntary contributions of individuals, have been adopted in all countries, to mark the public sense of services to the human family, especially when such services have reflected honor and distinction upon the country where they have been performed.

We propose that a national subscription be instituted, the avails of which shall be paid into the hands of THOMAS B. CURTIS and CHARLES H. MILLS, Esquires, as Trustees—to be held, appropriated, and invested upon such trusts, and for such uses, for the benefit of Dr. MORTON, as the Trustees may determine.

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OF THE

MEMBERS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:

The undersigned hereby testify to your honorable body, that in their opinion Dr. William T. G. Morton first proved to the world that ether would produce insensibility to the pain of surgical operations, and that it could be used with safety. In their opinion, his fellow-men owe a debt to him for this knowledge. Wherefore, they respectfully ask a recognition by Congress of his services to his country and mankind:—

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